financial resources internally to fulfil the coal production target by 2000 A.D.; and

(b) if so, in what manner Government propose to meet the situation ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) and (b) : The Planning Commission has not fixed any coal production target for the year 2000 A.D. The Planning Commission has, however, fixed a coal production target of 270.00 million tonnes for Coal India Ltd. for 1996-97, the terminal year of the Eighth Five Year Plan. To meet this production target, the Planning Commission has approved an Eighth Plan Outlay of Rs. 8520.00 crores (at 1991-92 prices) for Coal India Limited. As this outlay has been fixed after taking into consideration the ability of Coal India Ltd. to generate financial resources internally, it is expected that Coal India Ltd. will be able to meet its coal production target fixed for 1996-97. Various efficiency measures like rationalisation in manpower, improvement in productivity, absorption of a part of escalation of input costs and annual revision of price of coal etc. are being adopted by CIL to meet the future production targets.

Agreement with Australia for Coal Mining

1990. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 995 given in the Rajya Sabha on 30th Nov. 1992 and state :

(a) whether any agreement with Australia has been signed;

(b) if so, the details thereof,

(c) whether the new coal mining technology would be adopted by the experts; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) and (b) : An Agreement to implement Piparwar Integrated Mine-cum-Coal Beneficiation Project on turn-key basis was signed between Coal India Ltd. and White Industries Australia Ltd. on 28th September 1989.

The sanctioned cost of this project is Rs. 542.43 crores including a foreign exchange component of Rs. 223.89 crores. The entire foreign exchange cost has been agreed to be financed under concessional Australian credit.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, The turnkey project development at Piparwar among other things includes technology transfer and training of Indian personnel.

Introduction of Management Information System in Coal India Ltd.

1991. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Coal India Ltd. has introduced multi-dimensional Management Information System with the aim to imparting strict financial discipline and ensuring quality of production and consumer satisfaction;

(b) if so, what are the redeeming features of the proposal and justification therefor over the existing arrangement;

(c) what is the Financial/operational cost of the proposal and foreign exchange invalued on this account; and

(d) what is the name of the Company with which deal has been finalised ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) and (b) : The existing Management Information System (MIS) of Coal India Ltd. (CIL) with its various facets of functional management is being revamped with networking and computerisation with the aim of having a faster flow of information. Revamped system would inter alia help in drawing up of a realistic coal loading plan for each individual consumer and ensure uniformity in colliery-wise consumer-sector-wise, grade/size wise demand satisfaction in a given time frame. Revamped MIS would enable the top management both at the CIL and at the subsidiary company headquarter to exercise proper management control and enforce financial discipline.

(c) and (d) : The work of execution of this project has been awarded to M/s CMC Ltd. (CMC), a public sector undertaking on a turn-key basis. The capital cost of the system is about Rs. 6.0 crores and the operational cost per year would be about Rs. 1.5 crores. CIL would be making payment to the CMC in Indian Currency and no foreign exchange payment is involved from CIL to CMC.

Opencast mining in the coalfields of Upper Assam

1992. SHRI BHADRESHWAR GOHAIN : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have allowed opencast mining in the coalfields of Upper Assam;

(b) whether Government are aware that due to the large scale opencast mining, the nearby areas are badly affected and the adjoining paddy fields are completely damaged by the waste of the minings; and

(c) what is the reason to allow opencast mining in Assam in spite of vehement protest by the people ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) to (c) The issue of environmental degradation caused by opencast mining has been earlier brought to the notice of the Central Government by various distinguished persons, organisations and Govt. of Assam. The Ministry of Environment & Forests had constituted an Expert Committee in 1988 to look into the environmental problems arising out of coal mining operations by CIL. On the basis of the recommendations of the Expert Committee the Govt. decided to stop opencast mining at Tikak. The various protection measures undertaken at Tikak OC are monitored by CIL, Govt. and the Assam Pollution Control Board. The Govt. of Assam have expressed satisfaction with the environmental protection measures undertaken at Tikak.

Opencast coal mining in Upper Assam is being undertaken within the mining lease hold. CIL is committed to ensure environmental compatible mining operations. Therefore they have undertaken major restoration and reclamation programme of the areas like construction of dams, toe walls, gully plugging, bamboo barricades, backfilling of the voids, top soil spreading and afforestation etc. These steps are also monitored by the Pollution Control Board of Assam who are satisfied with the progress achieved.

Payment of Interest on CMPF Contribution

1993. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what is the procedure of payment of interest on CMPF contribution being collected from the employees and their employers every month;

(b) whether it is fact that CMPF authorities do not pay interest on the basis of every month subscription of employee and employer;

(c) if so, what is the reason therefore whereas other financial organisations are making payment on monthly basis; and

(d) what steps Government are going to take to save the CMPF members from this financial loss ?

THE DEPUY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) and (b) The procedure for payment of interest on the amount at the credit of a member of the Fund is prescribed under Rule 61 (2) of the Coal Mines Provident Fund Scheme which has been framed under Section 3 of the Coal Mines Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1948. According to the procedure prescribed, the interest is calculated on the opening balance at the credit of a member on the conclusion of the previous currency period. The currency period constitutes the one year period with effect from 1st April to 31st March of the following year. In other words, the interest is calculated on and annual basis and not on a monthly basis.

(c) As stated above in respect to (a) & (b) interest is being paid according to the Rules on the subject. The organisation's ability to pay interest to its members depends upon the interest earned by it on the Coal Mines Provident Fund. This